



Iowa General Assembly

2005 Committee Briefings

Legislative Services Agency – Legal Services Division

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JUDICIAL DISTRICT AND JUDICIAL RESOURCES STUDY COMMITTEE

Meeting Date: [November 3, 2005](#)

Purpose. *This compilation of briefings on legislative interim committee meetings and other meetings and topics of interest to the Iowa General Assembly, written by the Legal Services Division staff of the nonpartisan Legislative Services Agency, describes committee activities or topics. The briefings were originally distributed in the Iowa Legislative Interim Calendar and Briefing. Official minutes, reports, and other detailed information concerning the committee or topic addressed by a briefing can be obtained from the committee's Internet page listed above, from the Iowa General Assembly's Internet page at <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/>, or from the agency connected with the meeting or topic described.*

JUDICIAL DISTRICT AND JUDICIAL RESOURCES STUDY COMMITTEE

November 3, 2005

Co-chairperson: Senator Keith Kreiman

Co-chairperson: Senator Pat Ward

Co-chairperson: Representative Gene Maddox

Overview. Mr. David Boyd, State Court Administrator, provided a review of the Committee's work the previous two years and provided a review of the Supreme Court's Commission on the 21st Century. He commented the current statutory formulas are too rigid. Mr. John Goerd, Judicial Branch Planner, Judicial Branch, provided a review of the National Center for State Courts' weighted workload formula being utilized by the Judicial Branch. He noted that under the current statutory formula, the state is short 29 district court judges. He suggested the formula for district associate judges be made more rational. He stated there is a bill pending (S.F. 380) which would make a county eligible for a district associate judge for every 45,000 people in the county. Justice Marsha Ternus commented the preference from the Court's perspective is to have more flexible judgeship formulas. She further commented that if the Judicial Branch has more leeway in implementing any new judgeship formula, the General Assembly should still maintain final approval of any changes proposed by the Court.

Recommendations. The Committee adopted the following recommendations to the General Assembly:

- The Supreme Court draft a new judgeship formula.
- The General Assembly adequately and fully fund the Judicial Branch.
- The Supreme Court and the Department of Human Services work in partnership to provide better services to juveniles in a more timely manner.
- All magistrates must have a law degree; however, current nonlawyer magistrates do not lose their position upon enactment of this recommendation.
- An applicant for a magistrate position may be a resident of another county when applying for the position but the applicant must be a resident of the county upon appointment or a resident of a county contiguous to the county of appointment within 30 days of appointment.
- If the Chief Justice makes a finding that a substantial disparity exists in the allocation of district associate judges between judicial election districts, the Chief Justice may apportion a vacant district associate judgeship to another judicial election district upon approval of a majority of the Judicial Council.

- The Chief Justice may also authorize a voluntary permanent transfer of a district associate judge to another judicial election district if a substantial disparity exists in the allocation of district associate judges between judicial election districts and a majority of the Judicial Council approves such a transfer.
- The General Assembly provide adequate funding to the Judicial Branch to develop technology that will improve accessibility to court services and the efficient use of public resources.
- The courts and local governments take urgent action to fund and implement modern courthouse security systems.
- The state proceed with implementing drug courts on a statewide basis.
- Reauthorize the Committee for the 2006 Interim.

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